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Leroy Garrett, Editor

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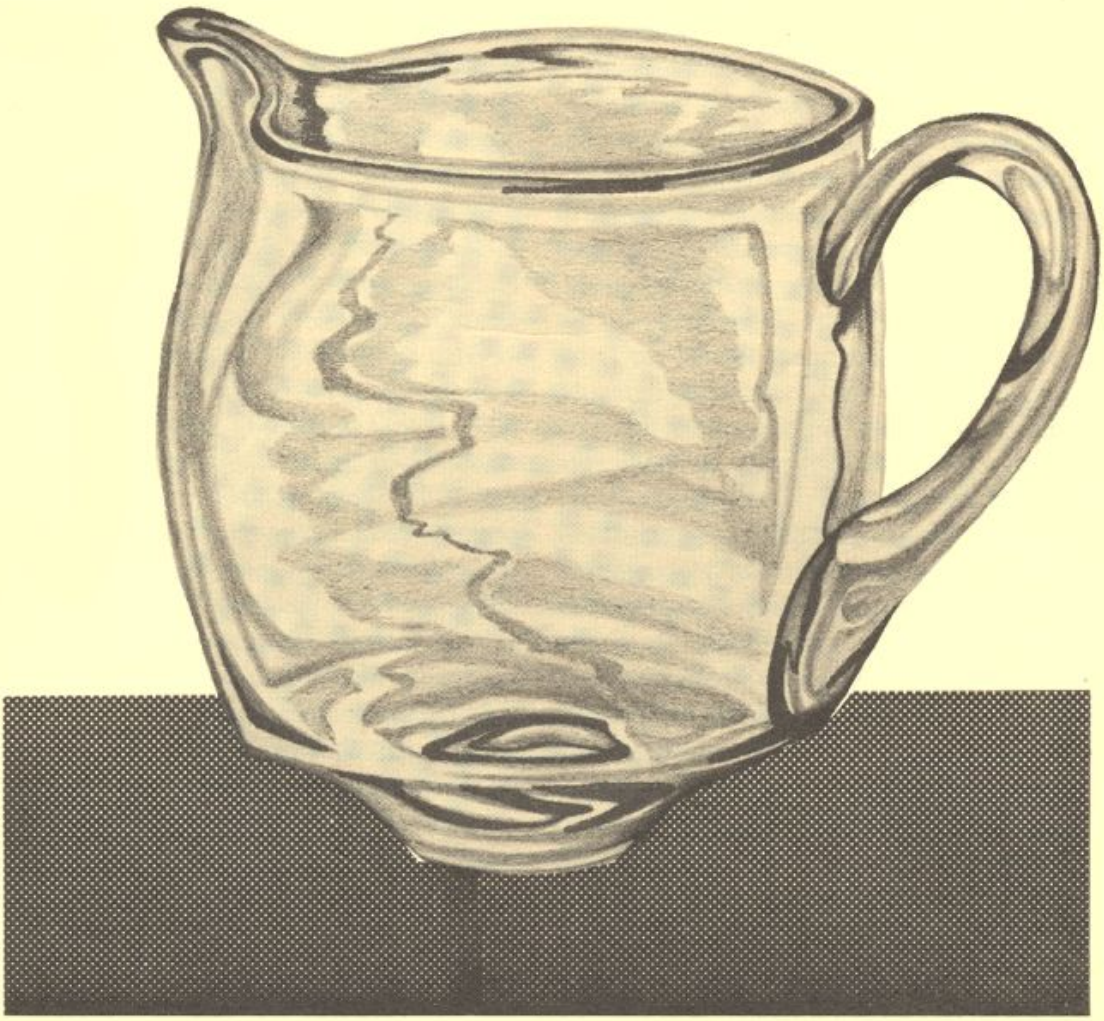

"In a large house there are dishes and bowls of all kinds: some are made of silver and gold, others of wood and clay . . ." – *II Timothy 2:20*

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The Word Abused . . .

"CAN TWO WALK TOGETHER EXCEPT THEY BE AGREED?"

A few times that I have arrived at an airport in some highly congested situation, such as JFK International in New York, or some very remote and obscure terminal, such as Marion, Illinois, and met a brother, perhaps for the first time, I have quoted to him Amos 3:3: "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" Then I add that it is just as well that that verse be used correctly once in awhile!

That use of the text gets much closer to what the prophet was talking about than the abuse it takes at the hands of some clergy who have party interests to protect, as well as less informed people who simply do not know what they are saying. When I fly from Ireland to New York and worm my way through customs and out into a foyer as large as a football field, packed with people from all over the world, and there meet a brother from upstate New York who has come to fetch me away, there can be but one answer: *it was according to plan.* We didn't just happen to meet like that!

Or I fly into Atlanta, St. Louis, or Chicago and change to a 10-seat puddle jumper that bounces me through the clouds (or more likely far below them) to a little airport out in a rural area. Only one or two of us get off. Walking into the small terminal with but a few people around, I see an inquisitive middle-aged couple, up to the airport from down country for the first time in years, who look for the world like they might be subscribers to *Restoration Review.* "You must be Leroy Garrett," they say, "we expected you to be fat." I retort, "How do you expect me to be fat running from folks all my life?" And now I have met a couple that I've been writing to for years. I walk from the terminal thinking about, or perhaps quoting, Amos 3:3: "Do two walk together (or three!), unless they have made an appointment?", using the *Revised Standard* this time.

There is only one possible answer as to why people meet in such unlikely situations. They have made an appointment; they had it all planned beforehand. That really is about all there is to Amos 3:3. There is no big deal about the passage, and one is left to wonder how it ever came to be used by many in the Church of Christ to teach that believers cannot be united unless they come to agree on everything.

The old rule of interpretation that one should see the text in the light of its context certainly applies in this case. Amos 3:3-8 is an extended cause and effect kind of argument that concludes with, "The Lord has spoken, who can but prophesy?" The *cause* is "The Lord has spoken," and the *effect* is "I (Amos) can but prophesy."

There are several cause-and-effect steps to the argument:

Verse 4 - The lion roared (effect) because he has a prey (cause).

Verse 5 - A bird falls (effect) because a trap was set for it (cause), and a trap springs up from the ground (effect) because it has caught something (cause).

Verse 6 - The people of a city are frightened (effect) because the war trumpet has sounded (cause). If evil has befallen a city (effect), it is because the Lord has done it (cause).

Verse 7 - A person is fearful (effect) because a lion roars (cause).

The verse in question is the first of these cause-and-effect steps. *Two men walk together* (effect) because they have made an appointment — or *because they have agreed to meet* (cause).

The point being made is that Amos, only a herdsman and farmer, is prophesying (effect) because he has a very good reason —the Lord has spoken, calling him as a prophet (cause). If one can understand that two men will not be meeting in a remote airport terminal unless they have made arrangements, then he should be able to understand that Amos would not be prophesying if the Lord had not called him. A lion does not roar for no reason, nor are people frightened without a cause. Since I am prophesying, it is because the Lord has called me. This is what Amos is saying.

It is incredible that a misinterpretation could catch hold as this one has on Amos 3:3. One can hear it at college lectureships and from many pulpits, and he can read it in papers, books and church bulletins. “Can two walk together except they be agreed?” is made to teach that people cannot be together, united in Jesus, and enjoying the fellowship of the saints unless they be agreed on everything or most everything. One opposing societies or classes will insist that if he *walks* with a man, which is made to refer to fellowship, the two of them will have to agree on societies and classes. If one is a premillennialist and another is not, they can never “walk together” until they see the issue alike. If the other fellow has an organ or piano at his church, fellowship is impossible until he gives it up and comes over to our side, for we have to “be agreed” if we “walk together.” And there is no way, of course, for a Baptist and a member of the Church of Christ to share Jesus together since they are not “agreed” on all the points of doctrine.

One can only conclude that some dear soul back yonder, a debater or an editor perhaps, lifted that verse completely from its context and gave it this weird interpretation. It is rather easily memorized, and it makes a good argument for one who has already concluded that unity is dependent upon conformity. So it has lived on as part of our “stock in trade,” a prooftext that unity is contingent upon endorsement and approval. If you do not “agree” or approve or endorse a person’s position or practice, then unity and fellowship are impossible. Amos 3:3 says so!

But this is to brutalize the scriptures. So abusive is this that it not only neglects the context, but it is made to say the very opposite to what the scriptures really teach on agreement and unity. One only needs to *think* so as to realize that if this is what God means

in Amos 3:3 —that men must conform to each other's views in order to be united, then no two people would ever be in fellowship. If two people should happen to canvass each other's positions and strike an agreement on all points, it would be a tenuous thing. They would have to "disfellowship" each other the moment some difference materialized. They would be obligated to think no new thoughts, read no new books, learn no new ideas — unless, that is, the man with whom he "walks" and "agrees" comes up with the exact views.

It is amazing that men will use the scriptures, abuse them that is, to defend their own sinful, divisive ways. They will thrust a brother from them, refusing to call him "brother" or to ask him to address the Father in prayer, quoting Amos 3:3 every step of the way.

The truth is that God's people, in and out of the Bible, have disagreed about a lot of things and still walk together. Indeed, one is not going to walk with anybody unless it be someone with whom he disagrees on some things. It is silly to suggest that with all our diversity in degree of maturity, intellect, emotions, and circumstance of life, we can agree on everything or interpret the scriptures in precisely the same way.

Peter and Paul certainly did not agree on some rather crucial issues. Peter makes it clear that he not only did not always agree with Paul, but some of the time he couldn't even understand him! (2 Peter 3:16). And what congregation in the *New Testament* was in perfect conformity to any other one?

Forbearance is a Christian virtue that was urged upon the primitive saints again and again, in such terms as "forbearing one another in love" (Eph. 4:2), which shows that differences sometimes ran deep. In a congregation where conformity is the rule there is nothing to forbear. Besides, our acceptance of one another is to be on a kind of "as is" basis, with all our foibles and hangups, for that was the ground on which Jesus received us —*even while we were yet sinners*. And so Ro. 15:7: "Receive one another, therefore, as Christ has received you, to the glory of God." That chapter begins by urging: "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves." The entire 14th chapter of *Romans* lays down principles whereby differences of opinion are to be handled in the congregation.

All this bugaboo about how wrong the "unity in diversity" concept is only reveals how men can be blinded by partyism. In the first place, any sane man who merely stops to think knows that there can be no unity except in diversity, for that is what unity means, whether in a family, a country or nature —it is a harmony of diverse parts. In the second place, any reasonable person knows that there is a lot of diversity in every congregation. The very ones who demand unity in conformity, which of course never has been and never can be, are in congregations where differences are as thick as lice in Egypt, whether it be on questions about marriage or war or Freemasonry or abortion or spiritual gifts or how to interpret countless scriptures.

Each of our parties circumvents all this by demanding conformity on "the doctrinal issues," meaning of course the peculiar doctrinal stance of that particular sect. They might differ on what others divide over, while others differ on what *they* divide over, but they make sure that all others line up on what they call *the issues* or else. Quoting Amos 3:3 of course.

We all admit that there are those basics that we must all accept. This is why we all agree with the old slogan, "In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, love." The faith that we are all to agree on is a matter of facts of Jesus, not theories about every question that comes up about the work, worship and organization of the church. Those things fall within the category of *opinion,* and there is to be liberty, and this is why "unity in diversity" is the only thing that makes sense. It is the facts about Jesus — the facts are believed, the commands are obeyed, and the promises are accepted —that makes us one and unites us together in Christ. The disposition we make about instrumental music, supporting Herald of Truth, or forming agencies for the work of the church has nothing, but *nothing,* to do with our being in fellowship together with Christ. 1 Cor. 1:10 says that God calls us into the fellowship of his son. So it is not and cannot be determined by any kind of demand for conformity on this or that pet project or peeve of ours. Paul and Barnabas may have reached the place where they had to go their separate ways, because of their disagreement over Mark, but this did not in the slightest negate the common relationship they shared in Christ. Oh, yes, such conflicts may place stresses on the shared life (fellowship), just as a fuss between children in a family does, but it does not affect the reality of brotherhood itself.

And, yes, we may, for the time being, have to meet in separate houses because of our traditional hangups about organs, classes, cups, literature, tongues, or whatever. But it is imperative that we realize that we are all in Jesus together in spite of these differences; and because we are in Jesus together we are sons of God together and *brothers.* Thank God, we are brothers! We must accept each other as such even if we do meet separately.

One thing we can do now is to forget about that wildcat interpretation of Amos 3:3. An *organic* brother and an *inorganic* brother CAN walk together even if they don't agree on that issue. And so with all the rest of the opinions that we have allowed to separate us.

"Can two walk together except they be agreed?" If that is answered in the light of its context, the answer has to be *no,* for two men will not meet for an appointment unless they have arranged for it. But if it is made to me art what Amos never dreamed of, that two men have to see eye-to-eye in matters of religion before they can associate with each other, the answer has to be *yes,* they can and do walk together in spite of differences. This does not mean of course that they either endorse or approve of any position they believe to be wrong.

This is what religion is all about. That we might be brothers together in a family, not puppets dangling in mock conformity upon a string.

"Contacting the Blood"

I have said many times that one has to hang around the Churches of Christ for a long time in order to understand it all. You sort of have to be "born into it" and "cut your teeth" on it or it is completely incomprehensible. Such as the preceding article. Surely it is only some of our folk who use Amos 3:3 like that. No one else would ever think of it! So it is with this expression that I've heard all my life, and I've "preached" it with as much fervor as the next guy. *Contacting the blood.* I can imagine some biblicist like William Barclay or John R. W. Stott puzzled as to what in the world such an expression might mean, for, after all, it is *not* in the Bible.

Most of the old-timers made the argument of how the sinner "contacts the blood," and one can still hear it occasionally, especially in a treatment of Ro. 6. But the new-timers don't preach like those old warriors did, which I think is more unfortunate than fortunate. At least they said something, and a lot of it was on target. And they can be forgiven for an occasional deduction that confuses an issue more than it enlightens.

And this is what it is, a *deduction* rather than an induction. With induction one draws no conclusion but what is inherent in the passage; the passage itself *forces* the conclusion. With deduction one has his premise already in hand and is using the passage to support it. When Alex Campbell was visiting in England, an Anglican priest rose to his feet on one occasion following one of Alex's long presentations, and said something to the effect that Alexander Campbell was recovering for the church "the Baconian approach" to scripture, and that he wanted to commend it. This was the most unique thing about Campbell's teaching, his inductive approach to scripture. Francis Bacon was known as "the father of induction" which made him one of the fathers of modern science, and Campbell, influenced by him, sought to interpret the scriptures with the same scientific method. That was what the Anglican was applauding. Bacon's idea was: *reach no conclusion but what the evidence forces upon you.*

With a rule like that many, if not most, of our deductions will come upon hard times. This notion that we "contact the blood" in baptism is one of them. Ro. 6:3 says, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" And the scriptures make it clear that Jesus shed his blood in his death. So, the deduction goes, we "contact the blood" in baptism.

This is a risky conclusion, a shaky deduction. The context does not encourage such a conclusion. Paul's problem is that some of the believers wished to take advantage of God's grace by continuing to live sinful lives. "Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means!" he says in verse I. Then by way of question he reminds them that in their baptism they were baptized into Jesus' death. As he died, they died; as he was buried, they

were buried; as he was raised, they were raised, so that "we might walk in newness of life." It was the change of life, the new creation, that he was trying to get them to see. Baptism must make a difference. You died to something, to sin. Now you are to walk in a *new* life, not the old sinful one.

This would make "baptized into his death" refer more to suffering or the crucifixion of the old self, or a separation from the old life. Paul wants the Romans to realize that they were supposed to have *died* —died with Jesus and therefore to sin, baptized into his death. The new creation implied in baptism is his point.

"Contacting the blood" in baptism is not only an unscriptural term, but it is a misleading concept, if indeed it has any meaning at all. If blood is made to mean life, which would have scriptural ground, then it is downright erroneous to speak of "contacting the blood" in baptism. Life begins at the time of begettal, not at the time of birth. Baptism is a *birth,* not the beginning of life. "He that believes on the Son has eternal life," Jn. 3:36 assures us, while 1 Jn. 5:1 tells us that the believer is begotten of God.

If "contacting the blood" is made to mean appropriating the death of Christ, then there is as much ground for relating this to faith, if not more so, than to baptism. There is no scripture that ties baptism to our Lord's blood *per se*, while we do have Paul referring to "faith in his blood" in Ro. 3:25 and Peter writing of "the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" as the means of being elected by the foreknowledge of God. So, if we are minded to come up with such a strange idea as "contacting the blood," we would have to give it wider application than just to baptism.

But why must we get all entangled in verb age that is unscriptural to start with? We can talk about being saved by his blood, justified by his blood, redemption through his blood, and even communion with his blood, and still be within the province of scripture. And we can talk about being "baptized into his death," and why can't we leave it like that?

Only exaggerated notions of baptism lead us to speak of "contacting the blood in baptism." There is still virtue in the old Restoration principle of calling Bible things by Bible names, and in couching our ideas in scriptural language. —*the Editor*

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What Kind of a Book is the Bible? . . .

THE MAKING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The scriptures of the New Covenant were not determined by some church council centuries after the apostolic age, as some presume. It was not a matter of ecclesiastics taking a vote to see which writings would make it and which would not. It is not the case

that our present collection would have been substantially different if some of the doubtful books had pulled a few more votes or if some that are included had received a few less. It is not that kind of story at all.

Nor is it a matter of a sudden and deliberate move on anybody's part, not even the apostles. The scriptures emerged gradually and almost accidentally, out of the contingencies of the times, more by circumstance than by intention. No one would have been more surprised than Paul or Luke to be told that they were writing a book for countless generations. Had someone suggested to Paul that the church should have some scriptures and so he should hurry up with his writing, he might well have responded: "What do you mean? The church already has its scriptures. I'm writing so as to help the saints with some of their problems." The earliest believers looked to the *Old Testament* as their scriptures, and it probably never entered their minds that they needed anything else, not for several decades, at least.

What eventually came to be "scriptures" has an obvious ring of authenticity as simply letters and personal correspondence. Luke wanted his noble friend, "the most excellent Theophilus," to know something of the story that he loved. Not quite satisfied with the documents then extant, he wrote his own, all for his friend's sake, and followed that with still another, giving *us,* unbeknown to him, *Luke-Acts.* Paul wrote *1 Corinthians* in answer to one he had received —and because Chloe's people liked to gossip! He wrote to the Thessalonians because of news brought to him by Timothy, and he wrote *Philemon* because of a runaway slave he chanced upon. *Revelation* was hardly penned with future generations in mind, for it is couched in symbols understandable to the persecuted saints under the yoke of Rome.

In reading here and there, especially each of the letters on their own, one is not impressed that he is reading a book. Paul tells the Colossians that "Tychicus will tell you all about my affairs" —which doesn't give *us* much information! And he tells them that they already have instructions on what to do with Mark when he arrives, which only makes a modern reader curious. He closes with instructions similar to those of a mother writing to her children, asking that they pass her letters along to one another: "When this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea." In other letters he urges Timothy to come to him before winter, for death was near, and he urged him to pick up the books and *especially* the parchments as he came through Troas. Paul had left them at Carpus' house. If Timothy was still having trouble with his stomach, he might try wine!

This is down home stuff. They weren't writing a Bible or any other kind of book, certainly nothing resembling a legal document that is to be handled with lawyers' tools.

That the scriptures were circumstantial in history does not mean, of course, that they were not *intentional* in the mind of God. He knew the ultimate purpose of it all, even if they did not; and He used them to bless us with what we now call the Bible. But it helps us in understanding it to realize that it emerged in the particular climate and circumstance of first century Palestine, and that it is to be interpreted very much the same as any other literature produced under similar conditions.

We may suppose that a leading church, such as Rome or Antioch, in 50 A.D. would first of all have the *Old Testament* as its "Bible," though they wouldn't call it that. They would also have several of Paul's letters, for these were copied and recopied, circulating from church to church. In time these were gathered as a collection and came to be known as *scripture,* taking their place alongside the writings of the prophets. This is because Paul was an apostle and his word was authoritative. Here we have the germ of a canon, for 2 Pet. 3:15 says: "Our most dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, has written to you: as also *in all his epistles,* speaking in them of these things; in which are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also *the other scriptures,* to their own destruction." By the time *2 Peter* was written there was a collection of Paul's letters and they were associated with "the other scriptures," meaning the *Old Testament.*

As early as 96 A.D. Clement writes to the Corinthians, "Take into your hands the epistle of the blessed Paul the Apostle. What did he write to you when the gospel was first preached? Truly, under divine inspiration he wrote to you concerning himself, and Cephas, and Apollo, because even then you had formed parties among yourselves." Another apostolic father, Ignatius, in writing to the Ephesian's, refers to "every epistle" that Paul wrote. Not only does this point to a collection by then circulating, but these men elevate the apostle's writing above their own.

As the number of living witnesses dwindled and the number of congregations increased, it became more and more important that records be kept of the life of Jesus and the story of the primitive community. So, in the generation following Paul's epistles, biographical materials began to be composed about the Christ, and those written by an apostle or an associate of an apostle were given a unique place. These, like the earlier epistles, began to be copied and recopied, circulating among all the churches far and wide. These scrolls by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were added to the church's library of inspired writings, not because anybody said so, but because they were the testimonials of man believed to have special authority.

These became all the more precious when the apostles had all died, and we are to understand that literally thousands of copies, in part or in whole, were made of their writings. Many scribes or copyists spent their lives cranking out manuscripts, most of which have long since been lost. Some scribes would take liberties they shouldn't have

taken, making corrections and additions they thought appropriate, but for the most part they were very careful indeed. But they did make errors, and these errors were passed along as more copies were made, which accounts for a lot of the variant readings we have in modern translations.

The oldest and most reliable manuscripts go back only to the fifth century, the autographs (original writings) have long since disappeared. But that is better than it sounds. A manuscript like Codex Sinaiticus, which is probably the best of all, is highly trustworthy even if it was made over 400 years after the events. This is because it is in a lineage of transcription that has proved reliable, and because it compares favorably with other old manuscripts, ancient versions, and the testimony of the apostolic fathers. All this is now part of what is called textual criticism, which is a highly specialized science. For a passage to "make it" as authentic it must pass a very rigid test drawn from a mountain of textual material.

For example, the eunuch's confession in Acts 8:37 appears in many, many manuscripts, referred to as "Western," but these are later and not as reliable. Somewhere along the line some copyist, perhaps because of a true tradition, added the confession to his copy, convinced as he was that it was appropriate. It passed on to many other manuscripts, for copyists would copy his emendation, supposing it to be authentic. But the oldest and best manuscripts, including Codex Sinaiticus, do not have it, proving almost positively that it does not belong in the text, and so in most modern versions it is not included in Acts 8 or it is relegated to a footnote. It is not a case of some modernist "trying to do away with our Bible," but the science of textual criticism at work, which assures us of the most accurate text possible.

While oral tradition about Jesus and his teaching was at first the most authoritative, gradually the four gospel writers emerge as of equal importance to the tradition. Their writings are referred to very early in history, which gives evidence to their acceptance. Papias (130 A.D.) sees Mark as an associate of Peter and as his interpreter. He also refers to Matthew's gospel. Justin Martyr (killed about 165 A.D.) writes of how "the memoirs of the apostles" were read in the assembly "on the day of the sun," along with the prophets, showing that the four gospels had long been accepted by that time. By 170 A.D. the church had a "fourfold gospel" drawn up, called the Diatessaron, the work of Tatian.

1 Peter and *1 John* were accepted early in the church's history, for they were viewed as the work of apostles. The historian Eusebius (325 A.D.) indicates that these two epistles were known as "catholic" and had been quoted from as far back as Papias, Irenaeus, Polycarp, Clement of Alexandria, and even the Gnostic writers referred to one or both of these books.

The rest of the *New Testament* was slower in gaining general acceptance, for they were either anonymous (*Hebrews*) or highly symbolic (*Revelation*) or of either questionable authorship or doubtful value (*2 and 3 John, James, 2 Peter, Jude*). Some churches came to accept these before others did, but they were at last accepted, certainly by the third century. No council decided this. They simply gained a place as "scripture" by their own internal evidence, by being what they were. Their true character was not as readily evident as with the others, so it took more time.

There were several other writings by the apostolic fathers (generation following the apostles) that received high acclaim by the church, especially Clement of Rome's letter to the Corinthians, the epistle of Barnabas, the epistles of Ignatius, and the shepherd of Hermas. For a time they were a part of the church's sacred library, but, lacking the apostolic imprint of the other writings, they gradually moved to a secondary role —still highly regarded, but not on the level with the *scriptures*, and so were not read in the assemblies. It is noteworthy, however, both the Shepherd of Hermas and Barnabas are included in Codex Sinaiticus! That shows that they were very slow in losing their ranking as primary scripture. And perhaps it suggests that we would do well to be acquainted with such writings. Hermas will remind you of Revelation, while Barnabas deals with the question as to whether Gentile believers are obligated to keep the works of the law. These two books, though highly esteemed, finally lost out as ranking with scripture.

But by "losing out" we are not suggesting that some group of men did not vote for them, but because of their internal character and authorship they could not remain in the same company with apostolic writings. This was by the general consensus of the churches that had access to all this literature.

The time soon came when various ones could speak of these writings as a fixed collection or as a canon. Eusebius, the early historian we have quoted, made out his own list, accepting everything in our present canon except *James, Jude, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John*, which he lists as disputed. Barnabas and Hermas he rejects as not genuine. The oldest list of all is called the Muratorian canon, based upon a fragment of Muratori (200 A.D.). He lists the same ones as in Eusebius, except for two of John's epistles instead of one. And he includes Hermas.

It was not until a bishop by the name of Athanasius wrote his Easter letter in 367 A.D., in which he made reference to all the *New Testament* writings, that we have a list precisely like the collection that we now have. But it should be realized that the bulk of the NT, yea the very heart of it, was accepted from the very outset for what it was, apostolic.

And *that* was the basis of judgment, apostolicity. It was not so much inspiration. Certainly what the apostles wrote was considered "inspired," but so were other writings. *The Shepherd of Hermas* was finally rejected, not because it was not "inspired," but because it was not apostolic. The early church sported no theory of inspiration. It was not

the point anyway. It was not a question as to whether the Spirit might move in a man, but as to whether he was an apostle of Jesus Christ, or a close associate.

While the Jews did come up with a doctrine of inspiration when they assembled *their* scriptures in the first century A.D., the early church did not. They rather believed that the Spirit dwells in every believer, and so "inspiration" may be rather extensive. So, in making up the New Covenant scriptures, they merely recognized what had always been accepted: that certain writings were apostolic and therefore authoritative, and none others. But they did not claim that only the apostles produced "inspired" writings. Inspiration was not good enough!

This question of inspiration will be the subject of our next. —*the Editor*

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Travel Letter . . .

IN SEARCH OF ROOTS AT BETHANY

That was the one thing that impressed me the most about the Bicentennial Unity Forum at Bethany, which was the 10th and last of the Annual Unity Forum. People were there in search of roots, especially was this the case with some of the younger set. Some even admitted that they were in search of continuity with the past. Bethany is an appropriate place for this if one happens to be an heir of the Restoration Movement, for this little village was, more or less, its birthplace.

Jefferson, whom God used in forming a new nation, had a way of saying in the face of crucial issues, *Let history answer this question.* But the Bible said something similar long before: "Put this question, then, to the ages that are past, that went before you, from the time God created man on earth." (Dt. 4:32). History may be "more or less bunk," as Henry Ford put it, if one is lost in a world of technology, but, if he is in search for meaning, he may find a page of history of more value than a volume of logic, as Justice Holmes put it. As for me, I agree with Lincoln that there is no way for us to escape history; yea, we are busy making history, whether we like it or not. George Santayana, the Harvard philosopher, said it all when he insisted that those who ignore history have to repeat its mistakes.

History seemed to have been on our side at Bethany, or at least with us. It has laid its hand upon this village nestled in the hills of the Old Dominion, made famous by pioneers who forged a frontier as well as a Movement. Upwards of 100 of us from several segments of our heritage met with a sense that the past has something to say to our confused state of affairs, whether as a nation or as a Movement.

Ouida and I made it a family vacation again this year, with Philip and Ben in tow, Phoebe being excused on the ground that she is now a married woman with her own show to run. Our northern route took us through Oklahoma, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. I addressed the saints in Miami, Oklahoma where we were guests of Bob and Betty White, longtime friends. We knew them when life was a real struggle. Now Bob is a college teacher and Betty a business woman, and they are grateful parents of bright and healthy children, as well as proud owners of an acreage near town. In Hartford, Illinois we stopped for a visit with Berdell and Dorothy McCann, who preside over what I call my "second home." We also knocked at the door of Otto and Margaret Schlieper, who are now nearing 80. But Otto was already at work, out digging graves and building houses. We found Margaret making jelly and canning. They are not likely ever to retire, but will rather be at work when the Lord calls them home. People like that apparently give little thought to Social Security and government handouts. And don't think I didn't remind my boys of this old-fashioned virtue before their eyes. Still at work at 80! Ben got the message, but he still has difficulty seeing how anybody could ever live to be 80. Time just doesn't last that long! Philip could appreciate people who are still at work at 80, and he thinks he might work like that by the time he's that age!

Our southern route home took us through the Mountain State of West Virginia, which we all found breathtakingly beautiful, and on down to Charlotte, North Carolina, where we had some business responsibilities at a gift and jewelry store exhibit. We are part owners of a gift item manufacturing business in Denton, and some of our wares were on display. I felt a need to get acquainted with some of the salesmen in that region. I am impressed with the high calibre people in that business and with their interest in excellence. Only the more creative souls survive.

En route we met with a Church of Christ in Salisbury, N.C., a new congregation to us. We were pleasantly surprised to see a group of 60 or 70 that included several black families. The young preacher, not long out of Sunset School of Preaching, was both pleasant and receptive. He asked that I remain afterward, that he wanted to ask some questions. He rehearsed some of the things he had heard about Carl Ketcherside and me, and he wondered if they were true, one being whether we believed in baptism. I told him that Carl was so disgustingly conservative and orthodox that it was laughable to think of him not believing something so clearly scriptural as baptism. And that even I, as a reckless liberal, had never questioned the simple declaration that "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." But I explained that it was more likely that his teachers had intended to say that Carl and I do not believe that one has to *understand* all the blessings associated with immersion into Christ, including the promise of remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit, in order for the act to be valid, a position that is consistent with Restoration leadership from the very beginning of the Movement. That involved us in a more extended

exchange, all of which was delightful and profitable. He is a beloved brother and I was blessed in discovering him. I claim them all as my brothers, and I love them everyone, especially those from West Monroe and Sunset.

In Atlanta we got in a visit with Stan and Dot Carpenter, a couple that I married back when, who now have two lovely daughters. I knew Stan when he was growing up, so it seemed odd to see him now as a bearded philosopher, holding down his corner at Georgia Tech. Present for the evening were also Bob and Linda McMath. Bob is also a young Ph.D. at Tech, and he claims that some of the inspiration came from the philosophy I taught him as a senior at Denton High School a dozen years ago. When Stan and Bob met, Stan said, "I know only one person in Denton, Texas. . ." Their common influence as boys has helped to cement a friendship that is likely to hold for a long time. It does something to a teacher, whose service in the classroom is about over, to see those awkward teenagers of yesteryear now Ph.D.'s, respected members of a university faculty. To teach our youth to think is still what it's all about, whether they become Ph.D.'s or not.

Before leaving for Montgomery we paid a visit to Underground Atlanta. Ben was especially eager for this since his Sunday School teacher had told him he shouldn't see it. The harmlessness of the place disappointed him, I think, but we all got some idea of what part of old Atlanta looked like, and the quaintness of the place makes it worthwhile.

In Montgomery we visited with a family that we have known and loved all of our married life, the Tom Martins. One of their boys is my namesake, and another of the children was to be named Ouida, but it turned out to be a boy. It is just as well, for now she will not have to spend a lifetime spelling and pronouncing her name. Just plain Jane or Mary or Sue ain't bad! Anyway, the Martins are busy serving the Lord in their retirement and enjoying their 9 children and 19 grandchildren, several of whom were present in an evening meeting we had in their home. Agnes Martin has always been something of a heroine to Ouida, for she has often seen her grace under pressure. That she would ever behave unseemly in any situation is to Ouida unthinkable, and I agree. And as for Tom, in life or in death he will remain one of the finest men I've ever known. I rejoice that they have a nice little home and acreage all their own near Wetumpka —"every plank paid for" as Agnes puts it. Since we know their story, we know that that did not come easy. I notice that those who have something in the twilight years are those who have worked, sacrificed, and saved. Ouida and I believe that there will be something special for the Martins in heaven, for even though they had a house full of kids, they made a home for still another, an afflicted five year old boy who could not even feed himself. He is now a 26year old man, though still a child, and he continues to bless the Martin home, as they put it. And it must be so, for Jimmy has lots of Martins who love him, plus all others who come to know him, including the Garretts. He proves irresistible when he eases up to you and says he loves you. Ouida heard him praying, on into the night, and she was touched that "those

people from Texas" were a large part of his concern. Maybe he is not so afflicted after all, as heaven measures it.

Also in Montgomery I spoke for Dallas Burdette's new congregation on "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," a lesson that proved encouraging to those who heard it. Dallas told of a meeting at one of the churches there just before my arrival that proposed to examine "the unity movement." An imported speaker from one of the colleges zeroed in on Carl and Leroy, making us look worse than we really are by mishandling our writings. A quote from Carl to the effect that the kingdom of God reaches beyond our own churches and the Restoration Movement was made to mean that people in the Church of Christ are not in the kingdom —and the point was pressed: *Carl Ketcherside says you are not part of the kingdom of God!* Dallas listened until he could bear it no longer. He stood and called the speaker's hand, showing how he was misrepresenting the facts. While he was at it, he told the assembly that I would soon be in town, and if they were really interested in what we taught, he could arrange for them to hear and question me.

That did not interest them. Why hear the man himself when you can bring in a professional bruiser to do the job up right? For hire this college instructor will give you the lowdown on Ketcherside and Garrett, and already I have reports of two such places where he has done his thing, a kind of specialty he has created. I look forward to meeting this brother who knows so much about my position, and who prefers to perform without any distraction from any of us. Dallas' boldness fouled up the works that particular time, and it did not exactly endear him to those who were running the show. One thing is sure, Dallas Burdette is fully capable of taking care of himself in any company, which makes him a fly in the ointment on such occasions. They know better than to mess with him, for he is unusually well read on what the issues of fellowship and unity are all about.

Not knowing about this incident (and not really caring if I did), I went to Montgomery and presented my two lessons, one on the glory of the Christ and one on religion as mercy. Dallas remarked afterwards: "If those brethren could have heard you talk about Christ and religion like that, I think they would be ashamed of the way they acted." Let's hope so, for I can have hope for a people that can still blush.

This seemed to have had special effect upon Ben, who turned 16 this summer, especially when Dallas told him how fortunate he was to be living with me, which was something of an exaggeration. Anyway, Ben came home determined to read more extensively in *Mission Messenger* and *Restoration Review,* especially stuff written before he was born or while he was but a small kid. He started with our *Resources of Power* (this journal for 1966) and has shown some excitement over what he has found. He came rushing into our bedroom the other night, hilarious over what happened out in Lubbock at the Church of Christ Bible Chair. I reported how one of the fellows placed a copy of *Mission Messenger* inside the *Firm Foundation* (the different sizes makes this easy) and read to the director of the Chair

one of Carl Ketcherside's articles. The director was most impressed and applauded the article, only to be terribly chagrined and embarrassed to learn that he had commended something in *Mission Messenger.*

Ben thought that was the berries, and trickier than anything that ever comes out of *Gunsmoke* or *Kojak.* Well, it shows that one never knows what will come out of these family vacations.

We wrapped up the two weeks with a visit with what I call "the Dirty Dozen" in Jackson, Mississippi. These are about twelve couples, more or less, who are spiritually excited, and who let their light shine in a mainline Church of Christ in that city. Loving and peaceful, they hang in there, hoping to help make the church what it ought to be. But they draw strength and encouragement from each other, sharing together and occasionally with controversial souls like me, even though their leadership does not exactly encourage it. But they are so beautiful, intelligent, affluent, and spiritual (obviously among the cream of the congregation) that they can't exactly be ignored. They are the Church of Christ of tomorrow, you better believe it. Thank God for the "dirty dozens" across the nation! I told them some of the highlights of the Bethany forum, and we talked some about the principle of reformation. It seemed to encourage them to realize that the church has never been all it should be, not even the primitive churches, and never will be in this world, and that we must catch the vision of *the church continually in need of reform,* and that this is our task. If we go out and start a "loyal" church, it too will need continual reform. And *that* is what Restoration is all about!

The theme at Bethany was "Our Movement and Our Nation After 200 Years," which provided us sufficient reason to call upon tested principles both political and religious. Jefferson was quoted: "I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man," as was old Ben Franklin, who, upon being asked the results of the Constitutional Convention, said: "You have a republic, if you can keep it."

We were housed in the new Millsop Center for Continuing Education, which could not have been nicer or more convenient. Gresham House, which adjoins the center, provided housing as luxurious as the finest motels, as did several of the nearby fraternity houses. We were served at the college's dining hall, and it was there, around the tables together, that the most important things happened.

We were blessed with a very fine, across-the-board, representation. The Disciples present included Lester McAllister of Christian Theological Seminary, George Davis of National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C., William Thompson, chairman of *Fellowship* magazine, Robert Shaw of First Christian Church in Miami, and Burton Thurston and Perry Gresham of Bethany, along with local Bethanians Hiram Lester and Richard Kenney, who were great assets though not actually on the program. From Christian Churches were

Charles Gresham, First Christian Church, Elizabethton, Tennessee; Edwin Hayden, editor of *Christian Standard;* and Kenneth Thomas, First Christian Church, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania.

From Churches of Christ were Paul Eckstein, Kanawha City Church of Christ, Charleston, West Virginia; Clifton Inman, Ohio Valley Christian College, Parkersburg, West Virginia; Vic Hunter, Liberty St. Church of Christ, Trenton, New Jersey; Gene Shelburne, editor of *Christian Appeal*, Amarillo, Texas; F. L. Lemley, Bonne Terre, Missouri; Richard Hughes, Pepperdine University, Malibu, California; and myself.

Some 70 or 80 others from 16 states were also participants in the prayers, exchanges, conversation and sharing. Especially outstanding was Perry Gresham's presentation on "Alexander Campbell as Patriot" and Richard Hughes' study of Campbell and early American religious thought. The Bethanians were pleasantly surprised that one could come all the way from the West Coast and from a new college and talk so knowledgeably about Campbell and his times, as did Richard Hughes. The panels on the authority of the scriptures and the nature of Restoration made some headway in getting to the nitty-gritty. And all the way through we heard much about Christ and his church, the evil of division, and the imperative of unity. And we need to keep on getting together and talking like that. It always has good effect when those who attend get back home.

Lester McAllister, longtime Disciple historian, reminisced about the Campbells on the lawn of the Campbell mansion, talking about everything from the trees he planted and the farm he ran to the study he built and the movement he launched.

At both Brush Run, the site of the first Campbell church, and at the cemetery, Perry Gresham and I shared anecdotes about our beginnings. Some were surprised that our very first congregation (not counting the Stone in Kentucky) met for two years, broke bread each week, renounced all creeds and sectarianism and worked for unity, without a single member being immersed. When Thomas Campbell finally consented to immerse the first two, he himself avoided getting into the water, but crawled out on a root and baptized from it. Though he then admitted that immersion was the scriptural mode, he himself was resolved that he would not "unchristianize" himself by being immersed, until finally he was persuaded by the example of his son. It makes for an interesting question as to just when Brush Run became a true Church of Christ, or church of Christ, if you like. A review of that history does not encourage absolutism. Almost certainly the Campbells themselves would answer the question differently than would many of my brethren here in Texas.

At the cemetery Perry and I talked about those whose bodies were there interred, sung and unsung alike. Not only the Campbells and their wives, but old W. K. Pendleton, who was *twice* Alex's son-in-law and a co-editor of his journal; dear old Robert Richardson, who I admitted to be my favorite —the village physician, moving about on horseback, with top hat and tails, and the biographer of Campbell, and himself a great influence for

good; “Miss Carny” or Alexandrina Campbellina Pendleton, brilliant granddaughter of Alex and longtime stalwart on Bethany faculty; Archibald McLean, longtime president of missionary society, who prayed for each missionary by name every day, and who later was a president of Bethany; Wyckliffe Ewing Campbell, the precocious 10-year old son of Alex and Selina, who mysteriously drowned while his father was in Europe; the Judson Barclays, our first missionaries (Perry likes to tell about their connection with Monticello, home of Jefferson), and Julian Barclay, great grandson of Alex, who died only recently, a schizophrenic who supposed that he was the reincarnated Jesus, but nonetheless a handsome, highly intelligent giant of a man.

Perry told of how the Scots periodically report to their cemeteries to cut the engravings on the tombs a little deeper. “That’s what we’re doing today, cutting the stones a little deeper.” It was a moving description and a great moment. And that is what the unity forum was all about. We were searching out old truths and valid principles so that we might cut them deeper. It was a search for roots in Bethany. With roots we can think in terms of fruits. —*the Editor*

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

J. C. Reed writes from his corner of remote Peten, Guatemala to the effect that the work is slow and difficult even after ten years of labor. Thousands are hearing him by radio. His part of Central America has very poor medical facilities: no psychiatric clinic at all, and even in the general hospital in the capital they are understaffed and poorly equipped. They use dishes without washing them and disposable needles are used over and over, and the doors and windows go without screens.

Philip Roseberry, for several years a worker in the Shiloh program in a New York ghetto, was shot to death on June 30. This was while in the line of his usual duties in Brooklyn. The motive for the murder is not known, nor have the killers been apprehended. Philip was an exemplary young man. He had been working for five years among blacks in the slums on very limited income, which is all the more reason some of us would like to help his young widow, who is expecting her first child soon. I recommend this cause as highly worthy, and those who receive your money will handle it responsibly. If you want to help, mark it for Donna Roseberry and make your check to Camp Shiloh, Inc., Box 627, Mendham, New Jersey 07945. It is tax deductible.

The Bossier Church of Christ in Bossier City, Louisiana had a "Why I Left" lectureship during the summer. One preacher revealed why he left the Pentecostal Church, another the Baptist Church, another the Adventist. One came from Illinois to tell why he left the Roman Catholics. Others explained why they left the Methodists and the Adventists. But it was Texans and a Californian left to tell of their meanderings within the Restoration family. A brother from Gladewater told why he left "the Non-Bible Class Church" and one from Tyler spoke of his former days with the Christian Church. The brother from Long Beach explained "Why I Left the Institutional Churches of Christ." That left James W. Adams of St. Augustine, Texas to do the honors with "Why I Never Left the Church of Christ." If you know us well enough, you can tell which of our "loyal" churches brother Adams was referring to. At least one person in the audience might have wondered what all the shifting around meant in terms of one's relationship to Jesus.

The *Chronicle* from Nashville tells of four more Christian Church preachers who have been "baptized into Christ," along with two Baptists and a Church of God man, by the Marvin Bryant ministry. All who believe in the "one baptism" should repudiate this sectarian practice. This journal holds that it is sinful to "baptize into Christ" people who have already been immersed into him. If our brothers wish to move from one party to another party, we can only regret that our divisive ways makes such possible, and we have no right to complain. But to sectarianize the "one immersion" is a different matter and we deplore that this continues to go on in the name of "gospel work."

A black teacher at Abilene Christian College has been serving as minister to the Central Church of Christ in Abilene. This is one of the few instances, if not the only one, among us where a Negro is the No. 1 minister in a predominately white congregation. The congregation has only a few black families, as west Texas generally has a very low percentage of Negroes.

Alex Solzhenitsyn has reported to the American press, which he files his complaints against, that there is a spiritual revival going on throughout Russia. He sees this as most significant, for it threatens the materialistic philosophy of Communism and could well redirect the future of the nation. When he was asked what America might gain from the Russians in the future, his answer was *spiritual renewal.* The resurgence is affecting all churches, he says, as well as the whole of Russian life.

A study between Lutherans and Roman Catholics has resulted in the publication of a 200-page document that questions the claim of the primacy of Peter. It is an ecumenical effort to understand the role of Peter in the New Testament, with special attention given to Matt. 16:18-19. Neither the Protestant nor the Roman Catholic position is defended. The Protestants have neglected to recognize Peter's prominence while Roman Catholics have assumed him to have authority beyond that of the other apostles, which the study finds

unlikely. Eleven scholars spent 45 hours discussing the question. They noticed with interest that Jesus once called Peter *Satan.* The scholars will continue their study of Peter in the Patristic (church fathers) period of the church and in subsequent history.

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OFFICE NOTES

Our bound volumes are going fast. We have no more of 1966 and only about1 5 copies of 1967 and about 60 of 1968. These, along with 1969 and 1970, all single volumes, are 3.50 each. Our double volumes are 4.50 for1971-72 and 4.95 for 1973-74. We advise you to order at once if you want any of these.

We do not encourage bundle subscriptions, for we have learned that they are usually poorly distributed. Most all of our sub list are *singles,* but we do send out bundles to those who request it, hoping that good use will be made of the copies. We will send you 10 each month for 1.50 per month. Back copies are 20 cents each, but we will send a random selection of I 8 back copies from the past 15 years for only 3.00.

If you want an exciting study of *Acts,* we recommend F. F. Bruce's commentary. It is unusually well done and easily read. It is 555 pages, hardcover and the price is 9.95.

Less expensive commentaries are available from Sweet Co. in Austin, written by our own Church of Christ folk —the more open and scholarly of our writers, I should add. *The Living World Commentary* is to cover the entire New Testament, and you would do well to have them all. We suggest you start with Richard Batey's *Romans* and J. W. *Roberts' Revelation* and test them for yourself. They are 4.25 each.

Also from Sweet is a delightful little volume by Jim Reynolds on *Secrets of Eden: God and Human Sexuality* for 2.45. It is a reverential treatment of sex by a former All-American basketball player (ACC) and a tremendous believer. We also recommend still another Sweet product, *The Devil You Say?,* which is perspectives on demons and the occult, written by five of our "new look" people, including Ron Durham, new editor of *Mission,* at 4.25. An older book is by that great sister in the Lord, Bobbie Lee Holly, entitled *Person to Person,* which will really warm your heart, at 4.25.

During September I will have weekends in Kansas City and Lubbock, and we invite you to join us. September 57 I will be with the Kenwood Church of Christ in Kansas City. Morris Yadon, 5040 Parish Drive, Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66205 can supply details. September 19-21 I will be in a cottage meeting with Dr. Thomas Langford of Texas Tech, at 3703 48th St., Lubbock, phone 806-795-1581. The weekend of October 10 I will be

with the Bassett Church of Christ in Sand Spring, Oklahoma, which is next to Tulsa. The address is 12 W. 38th St. This congregation, ministered to by Walter Jones, is really coming alive and we think you'd enjoy their meetings. This gathering will be a fellowship forum.

Ray Miller, 4388 Rota Circle, Ft. Worth, Texas 76133, can take care of all your magazine needs, including those you already take. Send your renewal notices to him, along with, a check made out to him. He is authorized to meet any price that you can get elsewhere, including publishers' special offers. And you can help a brother who depends upon this service for a living. He has been at this for seven years and he takes your business seriously. His disability due to cerebral palsy does not keep him from performing this ministry. He is an ACC graduate with a major in business psychology. We urge you to form the habit of allowing Ray to handle all your magazine business. It will cost you no more, and perhaps less, and it will encourage him to be able to serve you like this.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

Went to church at Westchester (Los Angeles) and Harold Thomas was back preaching after his operation. Looks great! —*Ruth and Ralph Bales, Long Beach, California*

I have been studying 1 Cor. 13 and can't come up with the traditional meaning of the 10th verse, "that which is perfect" refers to the completion of the New Testament scriptures. I've always thought that to be the right interpretation until lately. I guess I've listened to too many Church of Christ preachers. Now I understand the passage to refer to maturity. Adam Clarke says it means, "The state of eternal blessedness, then that which is in part, that which is imperfect, shall be done away; the imperfect as well as the probationary state shall cease forever." If this means the New Testament scriptures, please help me prove it. Perhaps you could write about this verse in your paper. —*Harold V. Clark, Rt. 2, Springville, California 93265*

(Adam Clarke says what nearly all scholars say, including our own J. W. McGarvey and B. W. Johnson. That the phrase "that which is perfect" refers to the scriptures is a parochial interpretation, not general or catholic, being limited almost exclusively to Church of Christ preachers. I do not and cannot take such an indefensible position. —*Ed.*)

I thought of you especially during the first week of June when I was at Pepperdine University, Malibu, California, for the third conference on the Concept of the Believers' Church. Coordinator was Dr. Richard T. Hughes of Pepperdine. The central theme was

restitutionism or radical dissent from the 15th century to the present. My paper was entitled “Restitution and Dissent among the Early English Baptists.” You would have been especially interested in the paper by David Edwin Harrell, Jr., of the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Dr. Everett Ferguson of Abilene Christian College gave the final message on Sunday morning. — *James Leo Garrett, Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76703*

I could have told you this while Dr. Glaser was yet alive, but I might have felt a little guilty in revealing his emotions. You were an updraft to him. There was something of a radiance that enveloped him when we recalled your visit at his bedside. When I read to him from *Restoration Review,* he most often asked, “Did Leroy Garrett write that?” It seemed to make a difference. Thank you for bringing a special feeling of joy into his last months. —*Evelyn Glaser, Box 162, Caruthersville, Missouri 63830.*

You are right in pointing out that the Bible is a difficult book. The popular notion that it is very simple is doing great harm to the cause of God. Too many ignorant, unlearned, untalented people are going about today claiming to be teachers and preachers of the Word, and we have our share of them. I often wince when I witness the pressure put on young men to become preachers and teachers for the coming generation, but I think with the exhortation to become such, there should be a strong admixture of information about the kind of personality, the training and the study required. —*Vernon Parrott, 426 Live Oak Lane, Weatherford, Texas 76086*

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